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Massachusetts Business Roundtable Releases New Report on How Foreign-Educated Immigrants Can Strengthen the Massachusetts Economy

Today the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, with support from the Center for State Policy Analysis at Tufts, released a new report: [*Tapping Untapped Talent: How Foreign-Educated Immigrants Can Strengthen the Massachusetts Economy*](#). The report highlights the challenges faced by foreign-educated college graduates, an untapped talent pool in the Commonwealth, and offers solutions for how this key population can fully participate in the state's labor market.

The report focused on the 106,000 foreign-educated college graduates currently in the Commonwealth and who have not gone on to pursue graduate work. It found that this population has a harder time finding jobs that match their degrees and tend to earn less than their U.S.-educated peers, costing the state's economy about \$2.3 billion per year in lost earnings and productivity.

Key findings in the report include:

- Massachusetts is home to about 240,000 foreign-educated immigrants. Roughly 106,000 of these immigrants are whom we refer to as foreign-educated college graduates in this report, meaning they have earned a bachelor's degree but have not pursued graduate work. The other 134,000 have completed at least some graduate work.
- These 106,000 foreign-educated college graduates face the most disadvantages in the labor market. Not only do they earn nearly 20 percent less than their U.S.-educated peers, they are more likely to be out of work, underemployed, or unable to obtain the kind of full-time employment they seek.



- Wage and employment gaps are especially pronounced for foreign-educated college graduates from Africa and Latin America, whose earnings are 35-40 percent lower than their U.S.-educated peers.
- Gaps also vary based on the type of degree attained. Foreign-educated college graduates with business and social science degrees face the stiffest barriers when it comes to finding jobs that match their talents.

In addition to providing data on the foreign-educated immigrant population and the obstacles they face in the labor market, the report outlines important policy solutions for employers, immigrant-serving organizations, and the state including:

For Employers and Immigrant-Serving Organizations:

- Increased talent recruitment efforts
- Flexibility in hiring

For the State:

- Dedicated funding for career counseling and workforce navigation programs
- Scale and increase funding for “English for Work” programs
- Increase immigrant participation in apprenticeships and internships
- Support for entrepreneurship and new businesses
- Tax incentives
- State-supported process for recognizing and translating foreign credentials
- Streamlined licensing requirements
- Grants and loans to help defray licensing costs

“The Roundtable has been focused on strategies to recruit, retain, develop, and diversify talent pipelines in the Commonwealth, particularly on growing our state’s talent pool by connecting to untapped talent sources,” said JD Chesloff, President and CEO of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable. He further added that “while the findings in this report are eye-opening, the solutions highlighted can impact people and our economy in significant ways. We look forward to partnering with our members, the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the legislature, and key stakeholders to move these recommendations forward.”

The full report can be found [here](#) and the executive summary can be found [here](#). For further information on the Roundtable, including our Talent Agenda, please visit maroundtable.com.



About The Massachusetts Business Roundtable

The Massachusetts Business Roundtable is a public policy organization comprised of Chief Executive Officers and Senior Executives from some of the state's largest employers representing over 250,000 Massachusetts employees. The mission of the Roundtable is to make Massachusetts the most desirable place to live, work, and do business by engaging private sector executives and public leaders to ensure access to a robust, diverse, and talented workforce that enhances the Commonwealth's competitiveness in a global economy. For more information about the Roundtable, visit maroundtable.com. For the latest updates and news on the Roundtable, follow @MABizRoundtable on Twitter

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